DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 476 856 TM 034 949

AUTHOR	Yates, Lyn
TITLE	When Young People Talk to You, What Does It Mean?
PUB DATE	2003-04-00
NOTE	18p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, April 21-25, 2003).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adolescents; Foreign Countries; *Interviews; Longitudinal Studies; Postsecondary Education; *Research Methodology; *Secondary School Students
IDENTIFIERS	*Interpretation of Pupil Answers; *Meaning Construction

ABSTRACT

From 1993 to 2000, the 12 to 18 Project followed young people through their secondary schooling in Australia. Twenty-six students at four different kinds of schools were interviewed at some length twice a year. This paper discusses the meaning of those interview responses and the tensions between reporting what young people say and determining what they mean or how to analyze the interview data. The paper discusses both the dynamics of the research act and the need to see the interview as a construction, as something situated, the production of one human subject speaking to other subjects. These tensions are illustrated through three examples from the study. The first takes one set of questions to one student in one interview. The second example takes the themes of one girl over the whole course of the project, and the third takes some extracts from interviews in the final year of the project to discuss the meanings made in the researchers' interest in how educational inequalities and differences are produced. (Contains 23 references.) (SLD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 476 856

Paper for AERA Symposium:
The Question of Generation:
Hierarchy, Social Discourse, and Adolescent Subjectivity
Chair: Sari Knopp Biklen; Presenters: Sari Knopp Biklen, Kathleen Weiler, Lyn Yates;
Discussant: Gaby Weiner

When young people talk to you, what does it mean?

Lyn Yates

Faculty of Education
University of Technology, Sydney
PO Box 222
Lindfield NSW 2070
Australia.
lyn.yates@uts.edu.au

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
L. Yates
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
1

TM034949

Paper presented at AERA Conference, Chicago, April 2003.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

When young people talk to you, what does it mean?

Lyn Yates

University of Technology, Sydney

"... people always ask you what you want to be when you grow up, and I just have no idea..."

"...sometimes you say it because you don't really want to go into it..."

[extracts from 12 to 18 Project interviews, 1994 and 1995]

From 1993 to 2000, I spent a good deal of my time as a researcher interviewing young people and trying to interpret, write about, make claims on the basis of, those interviews. The interviews were carried out with my fellow researcher, Julie McLeod, as part of our 12 to 18 Project, a project where we wanted to follow close-up some young people through the entire period of their secondary schooling. We were interested in schools and the production of difference and inequality; we were interested in subjectivity, and what gendered subjectivity today looks like, both as substance and as process, and we were interested in biographical change in the context of school, and the processes by which young people begin to form the sense of themselves and take the steps and the values and the thinking patterns through which they embark on their post-school lives. We took twenty-six main individuals, based at four different kinds of schools, and interviewed them at some length twice a year. In the course of those interviews, they said things to us and chose to not say things to us ("you don't really want to go into it"), they sometimes said contradictory things (one girl brought along a photo of her dog and told us a story about her childhood and this dog, and four years later told us she'd made the whole thing up because she'd forgotten to bring the photo of herself that we asked her to bring); they sometimes did not like the questions we were asking, sometimes talked about things we were not particularly interested in, and so on.

So, what does all this mean? How do *I* decide what it means, how do I convince *you* about what it means, how do the decisions and claims I and other researchers make about what it

means get re-made into the *broader* meanings of what 'young people' are like that consolidate as research fields or as media treatments?

It is common today for media – both press and electronic- to report on issues by putting side by side a general point ('young people today watch too much television, study finds') and a single or small number of 'real life' embodiments of the point ('John Smith says he turns on the television as soon as he gets home, because it's more interesting than reading', complete with photograph of John in his home watching television). Similarly, it is not uncommon, at least in Australia, for researchers to address a problem (why are boys losing out at school?) by going out and interviewing boys, and reporting chunks of what they say. But in both these cases two issues about the meaning of the particular stories, the cases, the lives, the texts are elided. One is an assumed transparency about what particular chunks of interview mean, an assumption that the quoted text speaks for itself, an assumption that includes a lack of attention to how they were produced. The second is a carelessness about issues of selection, of *who* got to be reported on, and a tendency to take the selected stories as standing for the whole ('this is how young people are', or 'this is how working class girls are') without theorising the issue of just who was being talked to, on what basis and by whom.

These issues of selection and transparency are further complicated by two somewhat contending imperatives that have threaded through youth sociology, feminism, cultural studies, and media studies (and many studies, especially by doctoral students, struggle to combine both imperatives). One imperative has been a concern about giving voice to the people who are the subjects of the research, to find ways to allow their stories to be told, of seeing these subjects as the authoritative interpreters of their own experiences, with the researcher's task being essentially one of mid-wife, publicist and editor. The other imperative is one where researchers are trying to use the interviews or voices as a step in getting at something beyond those stories; they aim to critically see-through commonsense understandings and to show readers a different picture of what is going on than the subjects themselves may be aware of. In this mode the researcher is taking on the role of critic, or diagnostician, or expert evaluator.

The emphasis on trying to give voice to the meanings that the researched groups hold has been popularized by researchers working with groups who have been previously primarily

represented by those who hold power over them: women, minority race and ethnicities, young people themselves.

But it has been criticized by others. For example, in a recent review of youth studies in the UK and the USA, Cohen acknowledges problems with some rigid forms of economism that had dominated British youth studies, but is also critical also of the recent cultural studies story-gathering, which he sees as too much 'quasi-anthropological concern with exotic instances of youthful deviance and difference'.(Cohen 2000) Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), is critical of a tendency to 'spontaneous populism' which takes subjects' stories as the endpoint of the research, and instead sees such narratives as a form of what might once have been called 'false consciousness', and at best are a partial constructed consciousness which itself should be the object of further investigation in order to understand social distinctions, inequalities, power. His approach argues that

> *every act of research is simultaneously empirical (it confronts the world of observable phenomena) and theoretical (it necessarily engages hypotheses about the underlying structure of relations that observations are designed to capture)*
>
> (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), p35

(Bourdieu of course has been criticized himself, for sticking to a belief in a certain form of 'structure' to be found, but his point about the limits of empiricism are well made.)

In a critical review of a number of textbooks on naturalistic inquiry, Wendy Hollway criticizes the inadequacy of their theorization of the subjects and their stories, and talks of the person we interview as

> *a subject who produces (rather than retrieves) accounts in the specific social relations of research, who avoids and represses certain issues, not just consciously but unconsciously, who may come from any one (or several) of a variety of positions in discourse in the process of giving information.*
>
> (Hollway 1995)

Researchers like these (and others such as (Walkerdine, Lucey and Melody 2000), (Ball 1998), (Gilligan 1995), (Wexler 1992)) do not see the subjects' stories as the end-point of their inquiry. The debates and criticisms of this type of use of research interviews include

arguments between rival theories about what types of framework best make sense of the data, and arguments by reviewers of qualitative texts, about whether these researchers are too quick to use up the voices of the subjects to their own ends, and too free in building vast theoretical edifices on relatively small bits of data. [[for example, two of the four reviewers in the review symposium of Ball's recent work (Avis 2001)]

The title of my paper, 'when young people talk to you, what does it mean?' can, of course, be interpreted in many different ways. What I've been trying to do in this first section is set up some issues and debates in a number of literatures about two aspects of an interview-based research project: the *interview act* itself, how we might interpret the meaning of the event, that is, of the text or story in the context of its eliciting – and that includes what is not said as well as what is said? And, secondly, the *research analysis or representation*, how we might interpret what the interview, and the project or interviews as a whole *signify*. I now want to talk about the 12 to 18 Project, and how we tried to address these issues in our project design, and in the interpretations and stories we now tell from it.

The project we embarked on *was* strongly framed by theoretical interests, in schools, inequality and subjectivity, and we were not setting out simply to follow and 'tell the stories of' twenty-six individuals. However, in choosing to do a *qualitative and longitudinal* study of twenty-six individuals as a way of finding out more about schooling and gender and other matters, we were trying to see, as Harriet Bjerrum Nielsen has put it, persons in discourse, not just discourses being writ in individual subjects ((Nielsen 1996)).

Because in our own study we *were* wanting to contribute to discussions about schooling and the production of inequalities, and discussions about the development of gendered subjectivity, we did want to take seriously this issue of selection, of who we talked to and what that meant – an issue that is more commonly associated with quantitative survey-based research than with a study like ours which was aimed to follow up close only twenty-six individuals. Because we had a concern that too many school ethnographies, and too many studies of gender and class had worked with a single site, or with a single binary comparison of disadvantaged and elite, we deliberately set up a study which would look 'in the middle', and selected sites so that we could look at young people of different backgrounds in the same school, and young people of similar background in different schools (Yates, 2000a, Yates 2000b).

And because we came to our study as feminist researchers, we also designed and carried it out with close attention to the relationships and constructing activities of the research act – we did not assume a transparency of what is being said as requiring no further reflection, and as speaking for itself. Indeed in an early paper we took seriously the issue that recent poststructural and feminist research has so much brought to the fore: the focus on researchers as constructors rather discoverers of 'truths', and wrote a paper titled '*Can* we find out about girls and boys today, or must we just settle for talking about ourselves?' ((McLeod and Yates 1997))

In our constructions of meaning we are trying to look closely at the dynamics of the research act, and of our own presence in that, but we are also working with a belief that the significance of what we see is not simply to be found in that interchange itself – our imputations of meaning draw constantly on comparisons of different types across our whole study as well as dialogue with a range of other research and theory. The design, that is, the location of the study in the four school sites, the selection of students, the sustained longitudinal interviewing, allows for a range of comparisons in relation to what is said: comparisons over time, between students with similar characteristics and those who are different, between those in the same school, and those in different schools. This sounds rather positivist, and I see some forms of naturalistic qualitative analysis which might treat coding in this way as rather positivist, but in the case of the 12 to 18 Project, the comparison is not the same as a factor analysis which *deduces* the influence of different features, it is an *interpretive* act, here the comparison is intended to help us look closely at our empirical evidence, and to interrupt quick assumptions that what we hear on a particular occasion is a story about gender, say, rather than school themes. The interpretation is also in dialogue with the broader literature, with other theories and research projects. So for us, 'meaning' is not a technical activity (compared with some forms of linguistic discourse analysis); nor is it singular (the meanings we are interested in are not necessarily the same as those individuals have about themselves, but that does not mean that those are false; and in some cases we present what we have found as possibly feeding different stories, and not something we can conclude within our study); but nor do we see 'meaning' as anything you want to say about what happened, which is why I have spent so much time talking about problems of empiricism and assumed transparency and discussing methodological design and selection issues.

The epistemological stance from which we were working was an acceptance that what we were producing was certainly shaped by us, was not the only 'truth' that could be constructed about the young people we studied – but equally, we were trying to design an approach where what we constructed could not be easily seen as an arbitrary story, or as only the story of 26 individuals we happened to interview. What we were trying to do was to take seriously the need to analyse the interview *as* a construction, *as* situated, *as* the production of one embodied, aged human subject talking to other embodied, aged human subjects in a particular location, the school. But what we were also trying to do is to find ways of engaging with the claims that other researchers and educationists make about how young people 'are', or what schools 'do'.

I now want to illustrate what we have been doing in the project, by taking three examples, all of which are discussed more fully in some other papers. The first example, takes one particular set of questions, with one student, in one interview. The second, takes the themes of one girl over the whole course of the project. And the third takes some extracts from interviews in the final year of the project to discuss what meaning we make of these in relation to our interest in how educational inequalities and differences are produced.

Example 1: Nuri

The first example comes from an interview in the fourth year of our study, a round where we asked all the students some questions about their views on some general issues such as unemployment, leaving school early, drugs, politics. In this case we asked them their views about Pauline Hanson, a populist right-wing politician who was getting a lot of media attention by being critical of immigration and Aboriginal welfare benefits, and in the paper from which this is taken, we try to analyse how the different students in our study construct views on race and immigration:

Here is the extract we want to look at:

> *Q: What are your views about her [Pauline Hanson] and the debate that she's generating?*
>
> N: I don't like it
>
> *Q: Have you talked about it much with your friends? Does it come up at home and do you talk about it at home?*
>
> N: At home? It has come up a couple of times at home. Um, not with friends.

Q: Do you think there is much racism in Australia?

N: Um, besides Pauline Hanson, no.

Q: You think not?

N: No.

And here, is the analysis we make of that small extract from one of the 300 interviews from our eight year project[1]. You will note that throughout it we are drawing on comparisons with other students in the study, and with this student over time, and we move from an initial fairly standard qualitative type of statement of interpretation, to one which reflects more strongly on our own presence and the constructed nature of what is produced on a particular occasion, but that that in turn tells us something not just about interviewing methodology, but about the issue of racism and discourse which is the subject of our focus here.

> "[...] A different response to racism in Australia was offered by Nuri, who was born in Australia, but has Arabic parents and is more obviously identified as 'ethnic' by physical appearance and accent. [...] Throughout the interview he positions himself as someone who comments on racism, rather than someone who has experienced racism
>
> One possible explanation for Nuri's reluctance to say more and his description of there not being much racism in Australia is that it locates him less as an outsider. Unlike Bree, he does not have sufficient white capital to jeopardise his national belonging by identifying himself as an Other who has experienced racism. Positioning himself as an observer of racism joins him with an 'Us' who oppose racism and discrimination against 'Them', and attests to his successful 'fitting in'— at school and in the culture generally
>
> But Nuri's responses also raise methodological issues about the effect of asking questions in particular ways, and of (unintentionally) inciting and

[1] The paper this is taken from is McLeod, Julie, and Yates, Lyn, 'Who is "us"? Students negotiating discourses of racism and national identification in Australia' forthcoming in *Race, Ethnicity and Education*.

producing certain responses. In retrospect, and in listening to and reading the interview transcripts, it was clear that our mode of questioning made it difficult for Nuri to respond in other ways. (Here too we need to acknowledge the accumulated history and effects of our interviews over the preceding four years, where two white women came twice a year to conduct social science research interviews with him at school. In these interviews Nuri is polite and co-operative but also a little uncertain as to what we actually want and what kind of responses he should be giving). His responses to our questions in this interview are noticeably briefer than usual, often a couple of words, and he appears uncomfortable, pausing in responses, laughing nervously, looking away from us, and is obviously relieved when the questioning stops. During the interview we too felt awkward, and unsure of how to manage the silences and uneasiness. We could see that he was uncomfortable but ending the interview early did not seem the right thing to do either, as that too could be another form of silencing.

We asked questions about Pauline Hanson and migration *as if he were an expert on the experience of racism (an Other) and he responded, in part, as a white Australian, an assertion of his national belonging and his white capital.* He does not take up the position of 'discriminated against Other' who might tell us as researchers some truth about racism. This was the position our line of questioning, unconsciously perhaps, wanted him to speak from. We did not regularly ask other students if they spoke about Hansonism at home, but by posing this question to Nuri ('the ethnic family must have encountered racism, tell us all about it') we betrayed our own desire for him to speak as, and be positioned as, the Other. In his answers too there was another kind of second-guessing of our desire to hear certain answers (that multiculturalism works? that Australia is a tolerant society?) and to not offend us as white Australians, to not be rude to members of the host country. So the dynamics of the research interview simultaneously produced a form of official multicultural discourse, an Othering of the research participant and a well-mannered silence about what Nuri 'really thought'

> In reflecting on their experiences of interviewing black adolescent girls as part of a study of girls 'at risk', Jill Taylor, Carol Gilligan and Amy Sullivan write of the silences, of what is seen and what is not noticed when white researchers interview black participants. In one telling example, they describe the failure of a white researcher not to notice or to follow up when a young black woman introduced a 'race' topic into an interview. The young woman refers three times to 'a racial comment' when describing an exchange between herself and a teacher, but the researcher does not return to this in any of her follow-up questions (Taylor et al 1996, pp.233-35). This occurred in a study explicitly and self-consciously concerned with relationships, and with developing a 'relational method of enquiry'. It was a study attuned to the effects of the researcher, to the dynamics of the relationship between researcher and researched and to the significant methodological effects of social and power differences in that relationship. Yet, it was only when they were on a research retreat to discuss the transcripts with an invited group of black and white scholars not directly involved in the interviewing, that the silencing of the 'racial comment' was noticed by one of the black women.
>
> [...] In our example, the question is raised of how racist and Othering practices enter the research scenario even when there is a heightened sense of researcher reflexivity; and even when questions about race are raised directly. [...] In wanting to hear the voice of the Other, the interview worked paradoxically to make it almost impossible for Nuri to say what he thought.
>
> (McLeod and Yates, forthcoming)

On reflection I would probably want to rewrite that last sentence. The interview does produce certain of the things that Nuri thinks (how he thinks about us and this context and speaking effects, and how ethnicity is part of that), but that is very different from taking as transparent representations of what he believes a statement such as that he doesn't discuss it much at home, or that he thinks there is not much racism in Australia.

Example 2: Katie

In the second example, in another paper ([(Yates 2001b; Yates forthcoming)), I have taken a series of extracts from interviews with one girl, Katie, over the seven years of our study.

At an immediate level, we can see some of the biographical features which are specific to Katie (for example, at 12 she was one of the very few girls to be dreaming about a future marriage and children, she has a period of strong rebellion, including lying to parents and staying out all night around 15 and 16; at 16 she decides to be a naturopath, combined with psychology, but at 17 changes to focus on art, and post-school is studying to be a dress designer). We can also see examples of themes she emphasizes in a number of interviews (dwelling on friends, and on finding who she really is), and other examples where she contradicts or gives a different account of a particular incident or time (in year 7 saying the best thing about school is friends, but later acknowledging that this was a time when she was very hurt by what her group of supposed friends did to her).

This is a particular person with particular agendas, making her life in particular circumstances. Trying to talk about the broader significance of what is going on in these interviews with Katie, involves thinking about what the wider literature is saying about social and cultural change, and making comparisons with other girls and boys in our study. What I have tried to do in my analysis of this is to show how the comparative focus within the study (with other privileged girls at this school; with middle-class but less privileged girls; with boys; with other students at *this* school) and with the broader literature is used in building my own interpretive meanings as to what is going on here. Here are a few examples.

In relation to gender and class, for example, Katie is one of the few girls at 12 to be thinking about getting married – but she herself sees this as aberrant and reports on her friends and her mother as making similar comments. It is clear from these interviews as well as from other studies that what Connell (Connell et al. 1982) calls 'renovated' middle class femininity now requires that women as well as men make themselves individuals in a public sense, have careers. We also see through the comparisons of Katie's interviews with others at that school, the effects of the school on her life and choice. The themes about difference and individuality are well-established class themes for the middle-class ((Connell et al. 1982) (Kenway 1991) [Walkerdine, 2000 #551, and ones that are intensified by the particular rhetorics of this school, which prides itself on being broader than other elite schools by having a lot of

emphasis on the arts as well as sport and schoolwork – and here I could draw on a range of answers students at this school gave in year 7 and later to our question 'what does this school value', which illustrates the positioning of the school compared with others in the study (Yates, 1999b) Like the other students we interview at this school, Katie has absorbed strongly this agenda of needing to 'be your own person', to establish and mark out your individuality, but also all the time comes up against reality of how very limited is the scope for not conforming: in dress, in values and behaviour required for group acceptance, and so on.

These themes of 'being your own person', of establishing your difference, your individuality, are never heard in interviews with the girls at the poorest school in our study, and heard only in much more muted fashion in the girls at the middle schools. For the most working class girls 'take it as it comes', and simply hanging in to school and to a reliable job, is a key issue. For other girls from more 'middle' backgrounds, the issue of getting a job that will pay well and let them do what they want to do (such as travel) is important, but it is not framed in the same terms of outstanding accomplishment, and establishing one's identity as it is with Katie and others from her school.

And Katie's gender identifications are interesting, and also framed very much by class dynamics. In interview after interview she tells us that it's important that she went to this particular school, because she is the fourth generation of her family to go there. But in fact, until the 1970s, this school was only for boys. It is her father, grandfather and great-grandfather who went there, and she is the first female to do so, but this is never mentioned by her. It is only some years into the study, when we explicitly ask about it, that we find she is not even sure which school her mother went to – she thinks it was a high school, not a private school. That is, Katie's identifications of herself as a school student are not consciously gendered ones – she sees herself here as the same as her father and her brothers, and she is both disowning her mother's history and also wanting to be a mother herself. Both class and gender are involved in the family dynamics and identifications that are privileged in her story of herself.

Another aspect that we noticed in the middle class girls in our study was a quality of reflexiveness, a type of reflexive sensibility, which is quite highly honed in this group. In earlier papers we have discussed other examples of this.((McLeod and Yates 1997; Yates

1999a): for example, of a girl not wanting to let her maths teacher know that his explanation was not clear because of how it would affect him and his broader relations with her; or, in an early interview, where a girl talked on about her various dreams of fame and glory and then looked at us and paused and said she'd also like to go and help the people in Somalia. And I mentioned earlier Katie's self-awareness that admitting to dreaming of marriage was not the thing to do in this era. In her comments in the final interview when she was reflecting on her period of rebellion and lying to her parents in the middle school years, she said to Julie, my co-researcher, who had been pregnant in our first interviews, 'I get scared telling you these things when you have little children' – that is, she was, as an interviewee, taking some responsibility for not disturbing the interviewer's piece of mind.

In terms of issues I have been raising in this paper about how we inscribe meaning in the sense of significance to interpretations of what is said, we might name this aspect of womens' subjectivity in different ways depending on which theoretical tradition we draw on and the type of positive or negative connotations we wish to give it. To call it 'reflexivity' is to give it a positive connotation, to connect it to the type of self-awareness and ability to self-critique that we ourselves aspire to as researchers. Giving it a more negative connotation, and relating it to earlier discussions of women's psychology as 'the other', we might call it ' learning to see yourself primarily through others' eyes'. Influenced by Foucault and Nicholas Rose, we might depict it as the imperative to self-monitor, to observe and discipline the self. Drawing on sociological understanding of subordinated groups, we could see this as the more highly developed sensitivity to norms of appropriate behaviour in different contexts that comes with lack of power. Whatever it is, it is particularly highly refined in middle class girls today. And in other papers on gender and class (Yates 1999a; Yates 2000a), I have tried to consider this further in relation to schools, inequalities and social change, sometimes drawing on discussions about new work forms and new literacies (Gee 1999); sometimes on British discussions of changing class forms and subjectivities (Walkerdine, Lucey and Melody 2000).

Example 3: Meanings and two school interview sets

One ongoing problematic for educational research is 'how do you get at the tricky issue of school effects?' And in particular how do you research and understand what particular schools do in relation to particular family, gender, ethnic biographies that have powerful effects. Again, what our study let us follow and consider was the themes and changes over time that took place by different and similar students in different school contexts. In a

number of papers (Yates & McLeod, 2000, Yates, 2001a) we have shown how at two 'ordinary' middle high schools, two different sets of values built up over the period of our study. It was not that these students ended up with identical views on the world, or doing identical things; it is not that school cancels out effects of family background, and other demographic features of the students. But different students at the two schools did take on some common trajectories and values that we can see in comparison and looking at our project as a whole. In a paper called 'Social Justice and the Middle' (Yates & McLeod, 2001a) we use the work of Nancy Fraser ((Fraser 1997)) and others to look at these differences in terms of ethics of distribution, and ethics of representation. At one school, students over the years, become sensitive to the agendas of inclusivity, speak out about racism, blame unemployment on social factors. But at the end of their time at school, they end up not highly integrated into a rat race for careers – in their first post-school year, most have dropped out, or are considering doing so, or are still finding themselves in some way. At the second school, there is a strong sense of the rat race, and a strong sense built up that individual effort is what matters. Students are not highly sensitive to issues of race and gender, and not overly sympathetic about unemployment. They have built a sense that their future depends on their own efforts, and most, in their first post-school year, are not only working hard at the first step of their post-school education, but are planning and taking steps on where they will go from there.

I will conclude with two extracts from final interviews with a student from each school. In these interviews we see a little of what two individuals say about themselves when they are 18, but the meaning to be put on what they say has to be built by a far larger range of reflections than can be assumed from a putting an interview extract on an overhead, or doing a bit of thematic coding.

Interview 1:

Do you think the school had much or any influence on where you ended up in terms of your course decision?

Not really, no. It was sort of a spur of the moment decision. I just read the VTAC guide, and it looked good, so I put it down. I didn't really look into it properly. Um, my careers teacher just pushed me to do whatever it was I wanted really...

Do you think much about the future?

Um I try not to...

What would you really like to happen for you in the future?

Um, I'd like to find out what it is that I want to do and go do it. I'd like to travel. Yeah, I just want to land on my feet, just sort myself out. Not make that same ... Uni mistake again [she had started a course, but dropped out after about a month]

[girl from Suburban High, 18 years old, drop-out from university, doing casual work. May 2000. Questions 800a, 1400a, 1500a]

Interview 2:

Do you think much about the future?

Yeah, the future's... you've got to have, got to have a goal .. because otherwise you just, you're going to university and you think oh, what's the point you know, so you've got to be focussed on the end

And what would you really like to happen for you in the future?

Oh, get a job that I'm happy with and enjoy, and get paid a nice amount of money [...]

And do you think much about long term relationships in the future, or family, children?

Oh, I don't think, like I don't think I really want to have kids in the near future because I'd rather set myself up financially and do a lot of things before I got tied down like that. Yeah, I can't see myself being a father for a very long time, or if ever.

And what kind of life would make you happy?

Life where I could have a nice home, some nice possessions, a few classic cars, have a bit of spare time and funding to put back into our shed at ..., restoring big engines, and being able to help my uncle [with restoring cars] and spend time with my family, mum and dad and brother and sister.

[boy from Provincial High 18 years old, doing Engineering at university. May 2000. Questions, 1400a, 1500a,1900a, 2000a]

References:

Avis, J., Brine, Jackie, Deem, Rosemary , Rikowski, Glenn (2001) Review symposium: Choice, Pathways and Transitions Post-16: new youth, new economies in the global city. by Stephen Ball, Meg Maguire & Sheila Macrae, *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 22, no.3, pp.423-433.

Ball, S. (1998) It's becoming a habitus: identities, youth transitions and socio-economic change. in *British Educational Research Association*. Belfast.

Bourdieu, P., and Wacquant, L. J. D. (1992) *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology,* (Chicago, Niversity of Chicago Press).

Cohen, P. a. A., Pat (2000) In the country of the blind? Youth Studies and Cultural Studies in Britain, *Journal of Youth Studies* 3, no.1, pp.79-95.

Connell, R. W., Ashenden, D. J., Kessler, S., and Dowsett, G. W. (1982) *Making the Difference: Schools, Families and Social Division,* (Sydney, George Allen & Unwin).

Fraser, N. (1997) *Justice Interruptus,* (New York, Routledge).

Gee, J. (1999) New people in new worlds: networks, the new capitalism and schools, in Bill Cope & Mary Kalantzis (Ed), *Multiliteracies: literacy learning and the design of social futures,* (London, Routledge,).

Gilligan, C. (1995) Hearing the Difference: Theorizing Connection, *Hypatia* 10, no.2 [Spring 1995], pp.120 - 127.

Hollway, W. (1995) Essay Review: Doing Naturalistic Inquiry: a guide to methods (D A Erlandson, E L Harris, B Skipper and S D Allen); Real World Research (C Robson); Doing Research on Sensitive Topics (R M Lee), *British Journal of Psychology* 86, no.1, pp.157-159.

Kenway, J. (1991) Conspicuous Consumption: Class, Gender and Private Schooling, in David Dawkins (Ed), *Power and Politics in Education,* (London, The Falmer Press,).

McLeod, J., and Yates, L. (1997) Can we find out about girls and boys today, or must we just settle for talking about ourselves. Dilemmas of a feminist, qualitative longitudinal research project, *Australian Education Researcher* 24, no.3, pp.23 - 42.

McLeod, J. and Yates, L. (2003, forthcoming) Who is "us"? Students negotiating discourses of racism and national identification in Australia, *Race, Ethnicity and Education* .

Nielsen, H. B. (1996) The magic writing pad - on gender and identity, *Young: Journal of Nordic Youth Studies* 4, no.3, pp.2-18.

Walkerdine, V., Lucey, H., and Melody, J. (2000) *Growing Up Girl: psychosocial explorations of gender and class,*

Wexler, P. (1992) *Becoming somebody: toward a social psychology of school,* (London, Falmer Press).

Yates, L. (1999a) How should we tell stories about gender and class in schooling *today*?, in A-K Broch-Due & A. Nilsen G.E.Birkelund (Ed), *Answar og Protest: Kjonn, klasse og utdanning i senmoderniteten,* (Bergen, University of Bergn Press,).

Yates, L. (1999b) Transitions and the year 7 experience: A report from the 12 to 18 project, *Australian Journal of Education* 43, no.1, pp.24-41.

Yates, L. (2000a) In this brave new world...of competitive schools and postmodern research: how should we tell stories about class?, *Tidskrift for lararutbildning och forskning (Journal of Research in Teacher Education Sweden)* 1, , pp.49-67.

Yates, L. (2000b) Representing 'class' in qualitative research, in Julie McLeod and Karen Malone (Ed), *Researching Youth,* (Hobart, Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Research,).

Yates, L. (2001a) Selves, social factors, school sites and the tricky issue of 'school effects', *Change: transformations in education* 4, no.2, pp.15-29.

Yates, L. (2001b) Shaping subjectivity in Australian school contexts. in *Developing from child to teen: gender, class and ethnicity in school today*. University of Oslo.

Yates, L. (2003) Methodological claims and interpretive warrant in small number qualitative longitudinal research *International Journal of Social Science Research Methodology Theory and Practice* [Aug]

Yates, L. and McLeod., J. (2000) Social Justice and the Middle, *Australian Education Researcher* 27, no.3, pp.59-77.

TM034949

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

REPRODUCTION RELEASE
(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: When young people talk to you, what does it mean?

Author(s): Lyn Yates

Corporate Source: AERA Conference Paper Publication Date: April 2003.

I.REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant aterials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in he monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Resources in Education RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper opy, and electronic/optical media, and sold through the ERIC Document eproduction Service (EDRS) or other ERIC vendors. Credit is given to the ource of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of he following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce the identified document, please HECK ONE of the following options and sign the release below.

__X__ Check here for Level 1 Release, permitting reproduction and issemination in microfiche and other ERIC archival media (e.g. electronic) nd paper copy.

r

____ Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and issemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival ollection subscribers only.

r

____ Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and issemination in microfiche only.

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality ermits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but neither box is hecked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

ign Here, Please

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) onexclusive permission to reproduce this document as indicated above. eproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons ther than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission rom the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction y libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of ducators in response to discrete inquiries.

Signature: Lyn Yates

Position: Professor of Education

Printed Name: LYN YATES

Organization: University of Technology Sydney (U.T.S.)

Address: Faculty of Education
UTS, Kuringgai Campus
P.O. Box 222
Lindfield NSW 2070
Australia

Telephone Number: (+) 61 2 9514 5230

Date: 29 April 2003

II. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC o cite the availability of this document from another source, please rovide the following information regarding the availability of the ocument. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly vailable, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should lso be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent or documents which cannot be made available through EDRS).

Publisher/Distributor:

Address:

Price Per Copy: Quantity Price:

V. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant a reproduction release is held by someone other han the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:

Address:

V.WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

You can send this form and your document to the ERIC Clearinghouse on

ssessment and Evaluation. They will forward your materials to the
ppropriate ERIC Clearinghouse.

ERIC Acquisitions
ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation
1129 Shriver Laboratory (Bldg 075)
University of Maryland, College Park
College Park, MD 20742

(800) 464-3742
(301) 405-7449
eric_ae@ericae.net
http://ericae.net